Annex A

Afghanaid

FOOD SHORTAGES IN BADAKHSHAN, AFGHANISTAN
SURVEY FORM 1995

Date of data collection :__________ District :__________

Number of People in the group interviewed :__________ Main Village :__________

Sub Village :__________

1. General Information :

A. Population Size :

* Number of families in the village now :__________
* Average number of people in the family :__________
* Number of Families came to the village :__________
* Number of families left the village this year :__________

1. CONSUMPTION PATTERN OF THE FAMILY AND VOLUME IN A MONTH

Quantity in Kilo Grams(Kg)						Remark
Wheat	Gee	Meat	Tea	Sugar	Kerosine	

2. PRICES IN BAZAAR

Prices per Kilo in the market						Remark
Wheat	Gee	Meat	Tea	Sugar	Kerosine	

3. EMPLOYMENTS (OCCUPATIONS) AND LEVEL OF INCOME PER MONTH

Title	Number	Income	Title	Number	Income	Remark
Farmer			Craftsman			
Lives stock owner			Laborer			
Trader			Government Employee			

4. HEALTH SITUATION:

Percentage of healthy and un healthy villagers					Remark
Healthy	Un healthy (common diseases)				
	Malaria	TB	Diarrhea	Mumps	

5. MEANS OF FOOD PROCUREMENT

Self Supplied		Food imported			Remark
Land	Livestock	Place	Route	Season	

6. PATTERNS OF DOMESTIC HOUSEHOLD EXPENDITURE:

Percentage of expenditure						Remark
Saving	Food	Medicine	Clothing	Groceries	Education	

7. NUTRITION STATUS:

Nutrition status throughout the year				Remark
Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Starving	

8. POPPY CULTIVATION & POPPY ADDICTION

Is poppy grown in the village ? No ( ) , Yes ( ). If Yes :					Remark
Since when	Reason	Total area	Yield /Jerib	No. addicts	

9. What was, is & will be the food situation in:

Last winter: Now : Next winter:

Why:

10. What will improve the food security:

11. What are the priority need of the village:

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents findings of a survey on food shortages in Yaftal and Argu districts of Badakhshan.

Badakhshan has always been a food deficit province. The local economy in Yaftal Ha and Argu has been based on subsistence agriculture. Three years of continuous drought resulted in harvest failure and the farmers cannot produce enough to feed themselves. Crops have failed and herds have been decimated by disease and lack of fodder. Many farmers have sold their cattle, mortgaged their orchards and land to feed themselves in the past three years. They have nothing left for the coming winter.

Despite the good harvest this year, food security will stay poor. There will be immense hardship in the end of winter and early summer 1996. There will be a **pre - famine** conditions in northern Yaftal Ha and some places in Argu. **36%** of the population which amounts to **18,535** people in Yaftal Ha (the northern part of Yaftal Bala and Yaftal Payan) and **31 %** of the inhabitants which amounts to **22,588** people living in the outer periphery of Argu will not have sufficient food to eat to this winter.

Health care in the villages is poor, and lack of preventive measures will pay rich dividend in the longer term. Malaria, tuberculoses (TB), diarrhoea, dysentery, measles and whooping cough were seen among the inhabitants, with children in particular suffering from the last two. A cholera epidemic has already stricken Argu resulting in the deaths of 97 people. Only one team of vaccinators have been dispatched to the Basic Health Unit (BHU) in Share Wahdat, Argu district to combat the cholera epidemic.

Poppy cultivation has increased as a cash crop in a desperate attempt by farmers to feed their families. However, the income from the lucrative opium resin will not solve the problem of the small farmers, because they have sold their product in advance last winter at 50 -60 % below the present market price.

Motorable roads to the villages are non existent, and logistics is going to be a constraint on any relief operation. Yaftal Payan is accessible by raft or cable at two crossing points across Kokcha River. Shipment of huge quantities of grains will be time consuming.

The security situation in the area is very good.

1. OBJECTIVE OF THE REPORT:

The purpose of this report is to highlight the food shortages in Yaftal and Argu areas of Faizabad and document the appalling situation which will probably follow in the winter of 1995-1996. Although the agricultural yield seems promising and the land will produce more this year but the population has always been dependent on imported food from Takhar.

2. METHODOLOGY:

For the purpose of investigating food shortages in Yaftal and Argu Districts, the following methodology was applied to carry out the Random Sampling Survey:

a. Two team of enumerators were recruited to collect data from the groups of (3-5) interviewees in the villages.

b. A questionnaire was prepared to collect information pertaining to food security and general conditions within the area. One questionnaire was allocated for each village. (Annex A).

c. The representative villages were pre-selected on an area map to ensure coverage of the area evenly.

d. Just before the commencement of the survey work a brief training session was held with the enumerators on how to conduct the interviews and fill in the forms.

e. Two supervisors led the teams in each sector. Each team was made up of two people, with one also acting as a guide to the area.

f. The survey was planned for two weeks. Yaftal Ha was surveyed in eight days (8-15 July) and Argu was surveyed in seven days (16-22 July).

g. A total of 126 villages were visited (70 villages in Yaftal ha and 56 villages in Argu) by our survey teams. This figure constitutes 50% of all the villages in the area.

3. GENERAL INFORMATION:

Badakhshan is the fifth largest province in Afghanistan bordering Kunar, Laghman, Kapisa and Takhar provinces. In addition Badakhshan borders Pakistan, China and Tajikistan. It covers 47,000 sq km. Much of the province is covered by hills and mountains, up to elevations of 7,000 metres.

There are several ethnic groups living in the province. Tajiks and Uzbek form the major ones. Sixteen different dialects are spoken in

the province. The bulk of the population is Suni Muslims of Hanafi school. There are also some Jafari Shia and in the eastern part of Badakhshan the people are Ismaeli.

The province is divided into two distinct zones of **Kokcha Hills** and the **North Eastern Alps & Pamirs.**

Yaftal Ha and Argu constitute a major portion of the Kokcha Hills around Faizabad.

4. YAFTAL HA:

Yaftal Ha is divided into two distinct parts of Yaftal Bala and Yaftal Payan. It is rather densely populated, with about 150 villages in Yaftal Ha and a total population estimated to be **50,000 - 60,000.**

The people belong to the Tajik ethnic group, and politically are predominantly pro Jamiat Party.

Generally the area of Yaftal Ha is hilly and the land is carved out by gullies, ravines and washes. The water running in the gullies comes from the springs in the hills and the melting snow on the peaks. The southern portion of Yaftal is comparatively fertile and the agricultural harvest is good. The agricultural land in the northern part is rather less productive because the land is rocky and the temperatures are lower. The alpine pastures in the higher areas of Yaftal are good for cattle grazing. Cattle are kept but shortages of winter fodder restricts the local people from fully utilizing the extensive alpine pastures.

Farming constitutes the main occupation of the inhabitants in Yaftal. But due to poor yields in the northern parts, a good percentage of people are dependent on animal husbandry there.

5. Argu:

Argu is situated to the south and south west of Faizabad. It is composed of **90-100** villages with a total population of approximately **70,000** inhabitants. The inhabitants belong to Uzbek and Tajik ethnic groups. The area is controlled by Commander Kheradmand of Hezbi Islami. Recently Kheradmand has broken his isolation and has joined the government. He has taken over as the General Chief of the police force in Faizabad.

Argu is also a hilly area surrounded with mountains. It has recently been promoted as a district with the administrative seat in Share Wahdat. The farming land in Argu is dissected by gullies, gorges and ravine. The central part of Argu is a plateau containing most of the irrigated agricultural land. The topography of the area is such that villages are situated in valleys near a spring or water source. The flat agricultural land in the centre stretches

outwards to hilly grounds with higher altitude. The higher land is less productive because of its colder temperature and longer winter seasons.

The alpine pastures are located on the outer periphery of the agriculture land. The economy of the area is based around subsistence agriculture.

6. FOOD PRODUCTION:

Crops are the main source of food production in Badakhshan. **70-75 %** of the village community are somehow associated with the land as land owners, farmers, labourers, share-croppers etc. **20-25 %** are occupied in animal husbandry and the reminder are government employees. Since the land holding size in Yaftal and Argu is generally small, the great majority of the people, except the small number of rich landowners (Zamindars), cannot produce enough to sustain them from harvest to harvest.

A number of factors such as limited rainfall, plant diseases, lack of agricultural inputs, decline in the top soil fertility, land slide, and forced conscription of healthy males into the armed groups, contributed to the failure.

The main agricultural crops are wheat, barley, potatoes, oil seeds, chick peas and vegetables. Rice and maize are grown on irrigated land only in some areas of Argu. Various fruits such as cherries, black cherries, apples, peaches, pears, quince, mulberry and apricot are grown in the area. Pistachio and walnut trees are naturally grown on the hills. It has become a source of income for the locals.

Contrary to the three previous years the harvest in the area seems promising this year. Farmers in Argu were very hopeful and confident that the harvest yield would be exceptionally good this year. The return ratio on seed in Yaftal and Argu is expected to be between **1 to 3** and **1 to 10**. The reason for this good harvest was said to be timely rainfall.

Even this years's rich harvest will not enable the small farmers to feed their families. During the past three years they have sold their assets such as cattle and mortgaged their properties to buy food. Most of them have even already sold this year's crop prior to harvest at rates 50-60% cheaper than the present market price.

7. LOGISTICAL ACCESS FOR DELIVERY AND PROCUREMENT:

The survey reveals that the farming communities in Yaftal Ha and Argu can only produce roughly 50 % of their annual staple food requirements through crop production and animal husbandry. The remainder of the grains for their consumption is procured from neighbouring provinces of Takhar, Kunduz and Balkh . Some supplies

are brought from Chitral in Pakistan.

* Qara Kamar is the only motorable road which links Badakhshan with the neighbouring provinces of Takhar and Balkh. This road gets seasonally blocked, in winter by heavy snow fall and during spring some sections are submerged and very muddy. There is another road which links the province via Shah Salem Pass with Chitral Pakistan, but it is closed most of the year due to snow.

* The road link within the area in Argu and Yaftal is very poor and proper roads are non existent. A network of foot paths and goat tracks stretching over and around the hills and on the sides of the gullies link villages with each other and Faizabad.

* There are two crossing points across the Kokcha River to Yaftali Payan. One is at Ferghambol, consisting of a raft on inflated tubes and animal skins. It has the capacity to ferry 1000 kgs at a time. At the second crossing point there is a suspended cable cart operated by two men. It can carry 500 Kgs safely across the river. Round trip of the raft takes well over an hour. Shipment of large quantities of supplies will be time consuming.

8. NUTRITION STATUS:

Badakhshan has always been a food deficit area with significant number of the population under nourished. Under nourishment is greater amongst the children because the family head gets the better portion of the food as he is the provider. The average family in the area is faced with shortages of staple food for the last 5-6 months of the year (winter and early summer).

The people in Yaftal and Argu make up the food deficit by importing wheat from the neighbouring provinces of Takhar, Kunduz and Balkh. During the past three years people have grown poorer. They have sold their land, cattle and valuables to feed their families. The poor have now lost all of their purchasing power. This winter they have nothing left to sell for purchasing wheat for their families.

Malnutrition is prevalent amongst the lower income group. The poorest families have no access to sufficient quantities of food to ensure a balanced, healthy diet which contains sufficient caloric value have energy and maintain normal body weight. Salty tea (Shoor Chai) with bread made of wheat, barley, "Patek" (Lathyrus Sativas) or a mixture of these constitutes the daily diet of the people. Meat is neither available nor affordable by the vast majority of the village inhabitants. Butchery is nonexistent in the villages. Occasional an injured or sick animal is slaughtered and sold to the people. Those households who keep livestock consume the dairy products. The the survey data shows the nutrition status in

Argu and Yaftal as follows:

NUTRITIONAL STATUS

Nutrition status throughout the year					
S/N	Place	Good	Satisfactory	Poor	Starving
1	Yaftal Ha	12.8 %	51.2 %	27.9 %	8.1 %
2	Argu	13.4 %	55.4 %	26.5 %	4.2 %

Good : applied to those who can afford three meals in a day with sufficient caloric intake.

Satisfactory: applied to those who can afford two meals a day with reasonable caloric intake.

Poor : applied to those who can afford less than two meals a day.

Starving : applied to those who have no income at all and live on the charity food donated to them daily by the village community (orphans and widows).

Signs of malnutrition were visible. Inhabitants were gaunt, seemed generally weak, with dry lips and faded faces.

The villagers in the northern parts of Yaftal such as Woojkail, Panytan, Zardalo and some higher places in Argu such as Bala Deh, Kakan and Karz where the soil is sandy and rocky, were extremely poor. The agricultural yield is inadequate and cannot feed the entire village population. Those who had the transportation fare for their families have already left the village and settled in Takhar and Kunduz.

9. HEALTH:

Generally the health situation is very bad in the villages. Malaria, diarrhoea, dysentery, TB, and typhus are amongst the most common diseases. Poor sanitation, lack of a hygienic environment, unclean drinking water, and malnutrition were amongst the contributing factors. No vaccination has ever been provided to the children in the more remote villages of Yaftal and Argu. Malaria is widespread and plays havoc with the helpless villagers. There is always somebody in each household affected by malaria. Dysentery, measles and whooping cough were seen amongst the children.

There are two health centres in Yaftal Bala, one in Kezan and the other in Palangdara villages. The health centre in Palangdara was built by a team of French doctors in 1985. The one in Kezan was built by Pamir Rehabilitation Bureau (PRB) in 1994.

The two hospital buildings in Yaftal e Bala are modern with sufficient space for the essential medical services. Unfortunately there are no doctors or equipments. The buildings are left unattended.

There is also one Basic Health Unit (BHU) in Shahre Wahdat, centre of Argu. The BHU is presently operational and a team of vaccinators from the Health Department of Badakhshan is seconded to cope up with the cholera epidemic in Argu.

People in the villages do not know that dirty water from the muddy creak in the village is harmful to their health. Health education and sanitation awareness seems to be very necessary.

Patek lang (Lathyrus Sativas) is a new phenomenon amongst the poorest families. Patek, a kind of legume meant for animal feeding, is eaten by some families. This was seen to have caused paralysis and resulted in deformation of lower limbs. There were several people in Yaftal and a few in Argu who were disabled by this.

While this survey was going on in Argu (16- 22 July) a cholera epidemic was starting. According to the head of the medical team in Argu, 18 people had lost their lives. By 24 July it had 48 victims. UNICEF and WHO in Faizabad are providing the BHU with plastic bags of syrup and some more medicine but they were not enough. One or two bags of 500 or 1000 cc was provided free, with the reminder to be purchased by the patient. One bag costs Afghanis 6,000 to 9,000 and it is not affordable by the poor. Since motorable roads are not available between the villages, many cannot reach the BHU at all.

10. POPPY CULTIVATION:

Badakhshan is a net opium exporter and most of the farmers in Argu and are familiar with poppy cultivation. Argu has irrigated land as well as rain fed land. Poppy cultivation was prohibited by Commander Kheradmand who controls Argu. Interviews with the farmers in the area revealed that drought and the poor harvests in the past several years forced the farmers to ask Kheradmand to lift the ban on poppy cultivation because the land failed to produce enough to meet the need of the households in the villages. They threatened the commander with massive immigration to Takhar or elsewhere if the ban was not lifted up.

In 1993 the ban was lifted and the people now extensively grow poppy there. 50 - 60 % of the irrigated land and almost 20 - 30 % of the rain fed land in the 53 out of 56 sample villages surveyed in Argu cultivate poppy. The ban on cultivation of poppy in Kochi, Sham Qarchi and Saraydara villages of Argu is still maintained by Commander Shaheem on religious grounds. At the time of survey, opium resin cost 250,000 Afs. per kg.

Most of the land in Yaftal Ha is rainfed. Poppy is mostly grown on irrigated land which yields more. It yields less on rain fed land therefore it is not grown in large quantities in Yaftal Ha.

POPPY CULTIVATION IN THE VILLAGES SURVEYED

Place	No. of villages	Area under cultivation	Total Yield	Average yield
Yaftal Ha	70	99.5 Jeribs	199 kg	2.0 kg/J
Argu	53	3575	20872.5 kg	5.8 kg/J

Note: 1 jerib = 0.2 hectar

As far as addiction to opium is concerned, virtually no one uses it in Yaftal Ha or Argu.

11. SCOPE FOR AGRICULTURE AND ANIMAL HUSBANDRY IMPROVEMENTS:

Agriculture is the main occupation of the inhabitants in Argu and Yaftal Ha. Animal husbandry stands second. Approximately 70 % of the entire population is directly or indirectly involved in agricultural crop production. 25% of the population is busy in animal husbandry. Craftsmen, government employees and businessmen constitute the remaining 5% of the population.

Provision of agricultural inputs such as fertilizers, improved seeds, introduction of new varieties of vegetables with better nutrition values, pest controls and crop protection measures will improve the agricultural yield.

Programmes to improve productivity and health of the animals should started, as animal husbandry also suffered set backs because of the drought. Provision of winter fodder became difficult for the owners and they got rid of their live stocks. Animal diseases such as anthrax, black-leg etc are the menaces that the owners cannot cope with.

12. RECOMMENDATIONS:

* Badakhshan has always been dependent on Takhar and other provinces for grains. Despite the good harvest this year there will be shortages of food in the winter/ summer 1996. The poorer families are most vulnerable because they have lost their purchasing power. Survey shows that 36% of the population in Yaftal Ha and 30.7% in Argu will not have enough to eat.

  Additional food supplies needs to be made available for at least for 23,000 people in Argu and 19,000 in Yaftal Ha.

* For a longer term solution to the food shortages in Yaftal and Argu, productivity needs to be enhanced ie; essential agricultural inputs and improved agricultural practices need to be disseminated. Crop protection programmes can help. Programmes for the improvement and support of income generation could be tried.

* Establishing veterinarian services will improve animal husbandry in general.

* Internal communication in Yaftal and Argu is very poor. Motorable roads connecting the villages with the market are non existent. Cash crops, fresh fruits, timber (poplar) and other products cannot get to the market. Improvement of the roads will improve the income level of the average farmer. Survey results indicate that improvement of the road system was the prime request of the villagers.

  Food for work programs are recommended to improve the road systems.

* Villagers suggested that an effective mechanism for distribution of any assistance to them would be to send a group of 2-3 people to hand out **coupons** to the deserving family heads in the village and have them collect their rations from the distribution center.

* Health education is essential for the improvement of health situation in Yaftal Ha and Argu.

* Farmers in Argu have resumed poppy cultivation out of necessity. An effective way to control illicit cultivation of poppy is to include Afghanistan in the group of 12 countries officially permitted to grow opium for medicine.

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SURVEY REPORT

ON

FOOD SHORTAGES

IN

YAFTAL & ARGU AREAS OF FAIZABAD, BADAKHSHAN

By the

MANAGER OF COMMUNICATION

&

STATISTICIAN

JULY, 4 – 25, 1995

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